

Will County ROA Plans Advance; Equipment Storage Offers Problem

Joliet Arsenal May Serve As Temporary Center for Unit

Until Joliet's long-dreamed-of armory becomes a reality, equipment and materials to be used by a Class C unit of army officers, to be organized in Joliet before the end of this year, may be stored at the Joliet Arsenal, it was indicated today.

Visiting army officers from Fifth army headquarters in Chicago told the Reserve Officers association members at their meeting in the American Legion building last night that a unit of reserve officers will be set up here if a place for storing necessary equipment, from "jeeps to cannon," can be found.

Arsenal officers said today that they believe a portion of the EOP unit might be available for storing the equipment until the armory is built. Adj. Gen. Leo Boyle is to arrive in Joliet before next week to select the definite site for the armory, which will either be east of Inwood golf course or south of Washington school. The funds appropriated by the state for the building of the armory must be spent before October, 1947, or the amount will revert to the state general fund.

THERE ARE 94 officers now signed up in the Will county ROA, newly re-activated a few weeks ago. Permanent officers for the first year, elected last night are: Maj. Raymond L. Charley, Lincoln hotel, president; Lt. Col. Henry A. Blomquist, 1210 Oneida street, vice president; Maj. Martin F. Massogilla, 357 Western avenue, secretary; and Capt. Edward R. Duncan, 501 Prairie avenue, treasurer. Appointed chaplain was the Rev. Edmund J. Welsch, O. Carm., a teacher at Joliet Catholic High school.

All former army officers in Will county are being asked to submit their name, rank and branch to the secretary of the ROA, Box 992, Joliet.

In addressing the group last night, Maj. Frank J. Halsey, executive officer of the Fifth army headquarters, Chicago, and a former member of the national guard from 1935 until 1941, said: "The powers that be have finally started organizing units. The state of Illinois has been given 181 units as a starter for the reserve. In 10 days or so, you ROA members will receive a letter asking you if you are willing to accept troop duty on an inactive status. There are all types of

service and ground troops needed and the locale of the troops will depend entirely upon the number of men in a certain area indicating their willingness to serve on inactive status.

"THERE ARE 400 former army officers in Will county," Maj. Halsey added. "If the most of them say they will serve on an inactive status, the greatest percentage of them will start in Will county."

This veteran of five years active duty with the famed 33rd division, who went overseas in January, 1942 with the Americal division and served on New Caledonia, Guadalcanal, Bougainville, Leyte, Cebu, Luzon and the occupation of Japan, added that active duty tours are also available. Three new categories have been listed, namely 12 months, 18 months and 24 months of active duty. These will be applicable to the retirement pension plan for army reserve officers.

Extension courses were discussed by Maj. Halsey and several of the men signed up for these courses, by means of which they will be able to obtain promotions.

MAJ. HALSEY served a total of 42 months overseas, coming back to the States in November, 1945. Before he entered service he was employed by the Western United Gas and Electric company. He wears the Bronze Star medal with an Oak Leaf cluster. The first medal was given him for his bravery as a company commander on Bougainville when he led a volunteer patrol behind enemy lines, "scouting and scalping" for 20 days and then returning with vital information which turned the tide of battle. The Oak Leaf cluster in lieu of the second Bronze Star was earned when he and two men volunteered to reconnoiter on Cebu. They cleared a main highway of mines and barricades "added a few more scalps to our belts" and were "lucky to come back alive."

He also wears the bronze arrowhead, for an amphibious landing against heavy enemy opposition at Cebu; the navy unit citation for action on Guadalcanal; the Philippine Liberation ribbon with one battle star; the Asiatic-Pacific theater ribbon with four battle stars, and arrowhead; the American Theater of Operations, American Defense, Japanese Occupation, and World War II Victory medals. In addition he has the Combat Infantryman's badge.

Maj. Halsey cited the need for a strong reserve to keep America

protected against any future war threat.

FOR THE air corps men present, and they were in the majority last night, 1st Lt. Elmo Oxley, officer in charge of the ground school at Archer Place airport, Chicago (the former Douglas plant) had answers ready for questions flung at him. Also present to answer the questions of the airmen was M/Sgt. Roy More, chief clerk of the air reserve officers branch, air reserve training unit at Archer Place airport.

"We're setting up a base unit at Archer Place, located at Mannheim and Higgins roads. There will be about 90 planes there and we want you boys to come up and fly them," said Lt. Oxley. "We now have AT-6, AT-11 and P-51 planes. We have about 80 men now getting in their flying time of four hours minimum to eight hours maximum a month. The program should be in full swing by Nov. 15. We're going to try to have a C-47 make regular runs between the Joliet municipal airport and the Chanute field so you fellows can get your Form 6-4's there, since CAA examinations are not acceptable."

Men participating in the program will be put on active reserve flying status. At present navigators, bombardiers, flight officers and other former air corps men can visit the field "for the ride in the back seat." But soon programs will be started to give actual training to all the airmen. There will be cross-country runs, night flying and formation flying, among other training. The airport is open seven days a week, night and day, for the use of airmen. Schedules will be arranged for those who can only fly week-ends.

SOME OF the local men who participate in the air reserve program will be able to qualify as instructors after enough training.

Lt. Oxley has been in the air corps since Nov. 5, 1941, following his civilian occupation as a cattle rancher in Texas. He started as an enlisted man was commissioned a second lieutenant Jan. 7, 1944. He arrived overseas at Kerachi, India, Aug. 12, 1944, and was assigned to the 23rd fighter group, the famed "Flying Tigers," of the 14th air force. He served in China and was awarded two citations from the Chinese government for the liberation of China and the aerial combat over China as pilot of a P-51 Mustang. He also holds the

arrive in time for the session.